

## **Justin Maxson** | *Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development*


Prior to being named Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development, Justin served six years as Chief Executive Officer at the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation. The Foundation works to support moving people and places out of poverty across the South. In this role, Justin managed strategy development, partnerships, organizational learning, board development and provided overall organizational leadership. Justin and his team worked to support a unique private-public partnership with USDA, Bank of America and seven foundations; developed a racial equity lens to inform their impact investing and tripled their 2020 grant-making in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before joining the Foundation, Justin spent 13 years as President of the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (now Mountain Association), a multi-strategy sustainable economic development organization and CDFI working in eastern Kentucky and Central Appalachia. In this role Justin managed strategy development, board development, fundraising and coordinated program development. Programs included small business development and entrepreneurial support solutions, energy efficiency and sustainable forestry strategies and targeted research and policy efforts. Justin and his team developed a unique “on-bill financing” energy efficiency program in partnership with five rural electric co-operatives, created a forest-based carbon sequestration program to generate income to reward good forest practices, and packaged innovative services to promote commercial energy efficiency, among other initiatives. At MACED, he was fortunate to regularly work with the KY Rural Development office and related financing and grant programs.

Justin was on the founding board of the Center for Rural Strategies, and a yearlong fellow at the Sustainability Institute and the Rockwood Leadership Institute. He served at the Kentucky Governor’s request on the Kentucky Climate Action Planning Committee and the planning committee for Shaping Our Appalachian region. He most recently served on Truist Bank’s Community Development Advisory board.

He has a master’s degree from Boston University and a bachelor’s degree from the University of Kentucky, both in Anthropology. He has two boys, one in college and one in high school.





### **Steffanie Bezruki** | *Chief of Staff of the Rural Business-Cooperative Service*

During nearly seven years on Capitol Hill, Bezruki served in a variety of leadership positions including most recently as Legislative Director for Congresswoman Abby Finkenauer and, previously, as Senior Policy Advisor for Congresswoman Cheri Bustos. She holds a bachelor's degree from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

### **Caryn Compton** | *Chief of Staff of the Rural Utilities Service*

Most recently, she served as the Chief of Staff for Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Compton has over 15 years of public service experience and has held senior roles in Congress, including Staff Director of the Senate Budget Committee, Legislative Director to Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas, and Legislative Counsel to Senator Robert C. Byrd. Additionally, she served in the Obama-Biden Administration as a Legislative Analyst in the Office of Management and Budget. Compton holds a Bachelor of Arts from Marshall University, a Master of Arts from the University of Arizona, and a Juris Doctor from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law.

### **Jamal Habibi** | *Chief of Staff of the Rural Housing Service*

Prior to his appointment, Habibi was a Senior Associate at the Opportunity Finance Network. During the Obama Administration, he served as Outreach Director at the Department of Treasury, and as a Special Assistant at USDA. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

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